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**Access**

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### Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center opens

By Robert S. Godlewski
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Kennesaw State University opened the Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center, an energy-efficient student recreation center named in honor of the University’s second and longest-serving president, Kennesaw State’s 50-year history. A large crowd of students, faculty, staff, and University supporters attended a ceremonial ribbon cutting on Sept. 10, which featured comments from Kennesaw State President Daniel S. Papp, Siegel and members of her family. Student guides conducted tours of the bi-level facility and demonstrated the latest, state-of-the-art exercise and fitness equipment.

Today’s formal dedication of the Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center marks a truly momentous occasion in the campus life of Kennesaw State,” said Papp. “By naming this beautiful building in Dr. Siegel’s honor, we pay homage to Kennesaw State’s president emeritus, her tremendous legacy and her student-first philosophy.”

Completed this summer, the Siegel Center is more than three times the size of the original student recreation building, which was built in 1967. During the recent construction, some 127,217 square feet of new space was added and another 47,175 square feet was renovated.

Based on the results of student surveys conducted by Kennesaw State’s Department of Sports and Recreation, the new facility includes two pools — an indoor competition swimming pool and an outdoor leisure swimming pool — one outdoor basketball court and four indoor courts, a multi-sport court, eight tennis courts, a weight and fitness area, a rock climbing tower, an indoor track and other amenities such as sand volleyball and racquetball courts.

“This new building is truly impressive; located in the heart of the campus, it is a world-class facility, a gathering place where students can come to enjoy a variety of sports, recreational, and school activities,” said Siegel. “I am honored to have it bear my name, and I’m deeply grateful to all of you for making this happen.”

### Kennesaw State welcomes football program in inaugural season

By Scott Wittsee
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The Kennesaw State University community redefined what Saturdays in the fall are all about when Owls Football arrived on campus for the first time.

On Sept. 12, the area around Fifth Third Bank Stadium was transformed as fans by the thousands celebrated KSU’s opening home game against Edward Waters College. By game time, the excitement reached a fever pitch and carried the momentum onto the field as the Owls won easily, 58-7.

“That crowd was phenomenal,” said Kennesaw State football head coach Brian Bohannon. “The student section, the packed house was phenomenal. That atmosphere out there today was unbelievable.”

Early in the afternoon, hundreds of students, alumni and fans lined up next to the stadium for the first Owl Walk, as Kennesaw State players and coaches marched into the locker room for the first time.

As game time approached inside the stadium, the 9,506 fans who made it inside were clearly ready for some football, as the full student section chanted “K-S-U” and the marching band revved up the excitement. The players emerged onto the field through a cloud of smoke, sending the crowd into a frenzy. By the time two F-16 Fighting Falcons soared overhead, the stadium was ecstatic. >>Continue on page 3
Kennesaw State opens Education Building expansion

By Jennifer Hafer
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When students in Kennesaw State University’s Bagwell College of Education returned to campus, it was to a new $20.3 million Education Building addition designed to maximize student-centered learning in the 21st century.

Faculty, staff, government officials and friends of the college celebrated the opening of the new 78,756-square-foot building with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting, which featured comments from Kennesaw State President Daniel S. Papp, Bagwell Dean Arlinda Eaton, state Rep. Ed Setzer and KSU Trustee Tommy Bagwell, CEO of American Proteins Inc.

The new addition will increase the college’s capacity to meet the projected need for teachers and school administrators in Georgia and create the space for expanded course offerings and programs. The building consists of classrooms, computer labs, seminar rooms, student study areas, conference rooms, the Center for Literacy and Learning, department suites and the dean’s office.

The publication recognized executives who are established leaders with a strong record of innovation in their fields, outstanding financial performance, a commitment to quality, a strong vision and a commitment to diversity.

Since taking the helm at Kennesaw State in 2006, Papp has implemented and overseen many significant milestones as the institution continues its rise in national prominence. The University has just completed a consolidation with Southern Polytechnic State University, which has resulted in an enrollment of more than 33,000 students from 150 countries and a ranking among the nation’s 50-largest public institutions.

In 2013, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents designated Kennesaw State a “comprehensive university,” emphasizing the University’s increase in research, graduate programs and global engagement. The University offers more than 150 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. Under Papp’s leadership, the University graduated its first doctoral student in 2010 and now offers 12 doctoral degrees.

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and Interim President Ron Koger (July 2014 – January 2015); Clarence Arnston, for whom the now-demolished MET Building Complex was named; Walter Kelly, a major contributor to SPSU’s textile program.

Renaming these streets is a powerful symbol of the combined heritage of two remarkable institutions, each with a history worthy of preservation,” said Daniel S. Papp, Kennesaw State president. “The new street names also reflect a broader effort to improve navigation on the Marietta campus by eliminating confusing names and making sure every street is identifiable by name. This is a wonderful way to accomplish that goal while simultaneously honoring people who have made outstanding contributions.”

The City Council also approved the renaming of five additional streets on the Marietta Campus, which was a part of the University’s plan to name all streets and simplify the street naming system on the campus.

Business community

cheers on KSU football

By Tiffany Capuano
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Football fever was in the air as Cobb County’s business community gathered at Fifth Third Bank Stadium to show their team spirit for the kickoff of Kennesaw State’s newest sport. The much-anticipated inaugural football season began Sept. 3.

More than 300 business leaders turned out Aug. 20 for the Cobb Chamber’s Business AfterHours event, “Tailgate with the Team.”

“This is a great community that is fired up and excited for football,” said David Connell, president and CEO of the Cobb Chamber. “When you see this much excitement, you have to look to its leader and the one responsible for bringing it all about. President Dan Papp, since his tenure began in 2006, has taken the university to a whole new level.”

The growth of Kennesaw State has been explosive in the past decade, with more than 33,000 students enrolled for Fall 2015. Kennesaw State is now one of the 50 largest public universities in the U.S.

“We had 1,014 students when the University first opened. We have more faculty now than we had students then,” said Papp. “But it has all been possible because of the tremendous support from Cobb and our surrounding counties.”

Football has been a long time coming at KSU, from the transition to NCAA Division I to construction of the stadium to the support from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and Kennesaw State students.

According to Papp, tailgating will be a big part of the football culture at Kennesaw State, with more than 86-acres available at the KSU Sports and Entertainment Park, providing a place for business leaders, students and the community to come together to show support for the football team at each home game.

“We can’t do anything great without a supportive community behind us,” said Vaughn Williams, Kennesaw State’s Athletic Director. “It will be another day in history when we take that field.”

Kennesaw State preserves heritage with Marietta Campus streets

Kennesaw State has been explosive in the past decade, with more than 33,000 students enrolled for Fall 2015. Kennesaw State is now one of the 50 largest public universities in the U.S.

The Marietta City Council approved a Kennesaw State plan to name the streets — Rossbacher Way, Cheshier Way, Arston Drive, Walter Kelly Road, Koger Drive and Clair Harris Road. The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved the plan in August.

The street names honor former SPSU presidents Lisa Rossbacher (1998-2014), Stephen R. Cheshier (1980-1997) and Interim President Ron Koger (July 2014 – January 2015); Clarence Arnston, for whom the now-demolished MET Building Complex was named; Walter Kelly, a major contributor to SPSU’s early success, for whom the Walter J. Kelly Memorial baseball field is named; and Clair Harris, whose contributions helped start SPSU’s textile program.

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And on this historic first day of football, the action on the field was all Kennesaw State, all the time. "Early on, everybody could tell the effort was pretty good. The guys were just playing hard, flying around, having a good time, enjoying the atmosphere," Bohannon said. "When they came on the field, they fed on that energy the fans brought into the game — thy added to it and made it even better."

The opening home game came a week after the Owls made their on-field debut with a victory at East Tennessee State University on Sept. 3. Fresh off that 56-16 win, the Kennesaw State players celebrated with the more than 500 Owls football fans who had made the trip to Johnson City, Tenn., to see history in the making.

"It's been a long time coming," said KSU head coach Brian Bohannon of the first game and the win. "The work these kids have put in and this staff has put in over the last two and a half years for me and some others and for them to come out and have a positive night that we can build on — hugging each one of them after the game — that's what it's about."

The game was a culmination of years of preparation, which began in early 2013 when the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved a football program for Kennesaw State. Since then, Bohannon and his coaching staff have been preparing the young players with multiple practices and intra-squad scrimmages. But nothing compared with the real atmosphere, "When they came on the field, they fed on that energy the fans brought into the game — thy added to it and made it even better."

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The School of Communication & Media designated at Kennesaw State

By Sabbaye McGriff
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The former Department of Communication at Kennesaw State University has been renamed the School of Communication & Media to better position the 25-year-old program to serve students and pursue national accreditation.

More than 1,500 students are enrolled in the School’s two undergraduate majors in communication and public relations, the master’s program in integrated global communication and an online graduate certificate in digital and social media communication. Communication ranks among the University’s top three academic programs in enrollment.

To meet the demands of growth, the School of Communication & Media will seek external funding and other resources. It also will pursue national accreditation through the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. A credential held by only two other state institutions — University of Georgia and Savannah State University.

“It is exciting to look ahead to what a School of Communication & Media can accomplish,” said Robin Dorff, dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, which houses the new School. “We look forward to creating a program of national significance as we foster an environment that supports innovative teaching, research and faculty development.”

In the transition to the new school structure, administrators and faculty members anticipate changes and enhancements to the program.

KSU Foundation recognizes outstanding faculty and staff

By Jennifer Hafer
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The Kennesaw State University Foundation awarded more than $134,000 to outstanding faculty and staff across both campuses of the university in an Aug. 13 ceremony.

The foundation awarded $111,500 in funds recognizing faculty excellence in research, teaching and professional service.

The top faculty award, the university’s “Distinguished Professor,” was given to John Salerno, the Neel Distinguished Professor of Biotechnology.

Randy Shelton, assistant vice president of Auxiliary Operations, was recognized as the administrator of the year, while Kristi Day, business manager for the university advancement department, was named staff employee of the year.

For the first time this year, outstanding part-time faculty were recognized with awards. Recipients included: Deborah Hutchinson, College of the Arts; Nicholas Papalecos, College of Architecture and Construction Management; Elizabeth Johnson, Bagwell College of Education; Raymond “Ray” Marquez, Coles College of Business; Regina Bradley, College of Humanities and Social Sciences; Martha Manty, College of Science and Mathematics; Charles DuVall, Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Technology; and Larry A.D. Byrnes, University College.

Professor of Music Laurence Serr received the first KSU Foundation Madhuri and Jagdish N. Sheth Distinguished Faculty Award for International Achievement.

The final new faculty award, the KSU Foundation Diversity Advocate Award, and $5,000 went to Associate Professor of Spanish Ernesto Silva.

New faculty were also recognized with early career awards. Recipients included: Scott J. Nowak, molecular and cellular biology; Andrew Whitehead, history and philosophy; Jennifer McMahon-Howard, sociology and criminal justice; Jennifer Louten, molecular and cellular biology; and Jidong Yang, civil and construction engineering.

Other faculty awards included: KSU Foundation Outstanding Community Engagement Award, Linda Hightower, professor of visual arts; KSU Foundation Outstanding Professional Service Award, Barbara Blake, professor of nursing; KSU Foundation Distinguished Research Award in Humanities and Social Sciences, Voikler Franke, professor of conflict management; and KSU Foundation Distinguished Teaching Award, Ana Maria Croiciu, associate professor of mathematics.

Other distinguished staff support awards included: Alda Wood, academic division; Megan MacDonald, academic division; Zelia Ray, administrative division; Patsy Bowen, campus services division; and Debbie Smith, campus services division.

Staff Senate scholarship awards went to Tarrica Wiley, administrative associate II, physics department; Marietta Campus; and Helene Davis, administrative assistant IV, enrollment services, student financial aid, Kennesaw Campus.

Professor Jeff Stepakoff to lead new Georgia Film Academy

University System of Georgia (USG) Chancellor Hank Huckaby and Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Commissioner Gretchen Corbin announced the appointment of Jeffrey Stepakoff as the executive director of the Georgia Film Academy.

The concept and rationale for the Georgia Film Academy was identified through Governor Nathan Deal’s High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) which was launched in January 2014 by Deal and led by Commissioner Chris Carr and the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDECD) to address Georgia’s important workforce needs. The HDCI focuses on the future needs of strategic industries in Georgia, including film, television and interactive entertainment.

Stepakoff most recently served as co-executive producer of Chasing Life for the ABC Family Television network. He is also a tenured professor of film and television writing at Kennesaw State University.

As the founding director of the Georgia Film Academy, Stepakoff will lead efforts to coordinate programs, curriculum and special learning experiences for students enrolled in the state’s university and technical college systems. The academy will be a virtual institution with the ability to operate where needs and opportunities exist across the state.

Stepakoff has an extensive background in the film and television industry. He has 28 years of experience in writing, producing and content creation. Some of his television work includes: The Wonder Years, Sisters, Flipper, Major Dad, Beauty & the Beast and Dawson’s Creek, which he co-executive produced. He has also developed pilots for major studios and networks, such as 20th Century Fox, Paramount, FOX and ABC, working with producers and production companies such as Alloy Entertainment (Gossip Girl, The Vampire Diaries), Michael Pillar (Star Trek: Voyager, Deep Space Nine) and David Milch (Deadwood, NYPD Blue). His major motion picture work includes Disney’s Brother Bear, Tarzan and EM Entertainment’s Lapički.

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